

COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11 REGULAR MEETING

DATE: September 8, 2008

PLACE: MS 158
(MARIE CURIE)
46-35 OCEANIA STREET
BAYSIDE

ATTENDANCE:

Steven Newman, Chair	Present	George Karahalidis	Present
Edith Basom	Present	Gordon Keit	Present
Daniel Berrios	Absent	Eileen Kenny	Absent
Lana Bind	Present	Incha Kim	Present
Rose Bruno	Present	Franklyn Lloyd	Absent
Robert Caloras	Present	Susan Macinick	Present
Ocelia Claro	Present	Janet McEneaney	Present
James Colasante	Present	Melvyn Meer	Present
Joan Corn	Absent	Eileen Miller	Present
Paul DiBenedetto	Present	David Millet	Present
Edward Doster	Present	Victor Mimoni	Present
Henry Euler	Present	Dennis Novick	Present
Mario Ferazzoli	Absent	Allan Palzer	Present
JoAnn Ferrari	Present	Stephen Pivawer	Present
Jack Fried	Present	James Rodgers	Absent
Joan Garippa	Present	John Rosse	Present
Roy Giusetti	Present	Andrew Rothman	Present
Bernard Haber	Present	Christina Scherer	Present
Christine Haider	Present	Gary Sekdorian	Present
Zion Halili	Present	Frank Skala	Present
Joseph Hellmann	Present	Mamie Smith	Present
Jerry Iannece	Present	Joseph Sollano	Present
Laura James	Present	Robert Speranza	Present
Mohan Jethwani	Present	Ryan Walsh	Absent
		Alex Yagudaev	Present

ALSO PRESENT:

Susan Seinfeld District Manager, Community Board 11
Linda Vallerugo Assistant District Manager, Community Board 11

Mark Scott	Representing Borough President Helen Marshall
Jordan Goldes	Representing Congressman Gary Ackerman
Bruce Eiber	Representing Councilman David Weprin
Brian Rivera	Representing Assemblyman Mark Weprin
D.I. Scott Hanover	111 th Precinct
P.O. Gary Poggiali	111 th Precinct

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Steven Newman, Chair

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of June 23, 2008 were accepted as written.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steve Newman reported that unfortunately Tom Lloyd has broken his leg ,and he is in North Shore Hospital. We do not have any further details at this time. (The operation was successful and he is on the mend).

As many of you know, Sol Soskin, who was a long time member of the Board and President of the 111th Precinct Council, passed away a few weeks ago. Steve Newman suggested that he thought it would be appropriate to send his family a letter of appreciation and have it framed.

Jerry Iannece commented that although our policy is not to consider naming a street after an individual until one year after a person has passed away, he suggested we make an exception to our policy, since Sol Soskin was such an active member of this Board and Precinct Council President for so many years. He proposed to name the corner at the 111th Precinct in honor of Sol Soskin. Some discussion followed regarding waiting the year, and Steve Newman suggested that our Transportation Committee review this proposal.

An Annual Turkish American dialogue dinner will be held at Queens College on September 18th, and Steve Newman asked if someone would like to attend and represent the Community Board.

On September 23rd, there will be an exhibit on the story of the Yellow Star/Star of Courage at Queensborough Community College. If anyone would like to attend on behalf of the Board, please let us know at the end of the meeting.

At a previous meeting, Mike Feiner raised the issue of changing the post office designation for Bayside Hills. We understand that Congressman Ackerman is moving forward with this issue.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Rick Lewis, Associate Executive Director at the Samuel Field YM-YWHA, spoke about some of the many programs available at the Y. Mr. Lewis pointed out that the Y is an agency for everybody, of all ages and races, and programs are available at various price ranges. For example, some of their programs which are government funded are offered at no cost to individuals, such as the Beacon program and many school summer camp programs. The Y welcomes and offers

programs for all age groups, from children as young as 6 months of age to seniors at the age of 105. Mr. Lewis briefly discussed some of the Y's significant programs for children with special needs, programs for adults from 18 and up suffering from mental illness and the Alzheimer's respite program. New brochures for 2008/09 are being printed now, and you can e-mail Mr. Lewis at rlewis@sfy.org for a copy of the brochure and more information on specific programs.

2. Moses McKoy spoke about the issue of large tractor trailer trucks parking on the side of the Clearview Expressway service road overnight and speeding through the neighborhood streets at 48 Avenue. He asked for additional police enforcement or suggested traffic cameras might be installed.

Steve Newman explained that to have cameras installed requires State legislation, and the State, to date, has refused to install cameras that measure speed.

Susan Seinfeld stated that truck traffic issue will be raised at the District Service Cabinet tomorrow morning. (At the District Service Cabinet meeting, Police and DOT were informed of the truck problem and "No Standing Anytime" signs were requested along the westside of the traffic island at the Clearview Expressway at Northern Blvd).

3. Anna Levine spoke about the traffic problem on Douglaston Parkway, at the Douglaston Townhouse Condominium entrance by Waldbaum's. There are three lanes of traffic on Douglaston Parkway with zebra striping on one lane to keep the traffic away from the entrance to the condo development. Motorists continually drive on the zebra striping and block the entrance. This problem has been brought to the attention of the DOT, Police and our elected officials. Ms. Levine asked for the Board's assistance to have "Stop Here On Red" signs installed at the entrance to the development. (This issue was discussed at the District Service Cabinet meeting and DOT is investigating the matter).

4. Larry Simon, Vice President of the Douglaston Townhouses, explained that with the closing of Exit 31 on the LIE, Douglaston Parkway was widened to three lanes to accommodate the additional cars. This widened the roadway by the entrance directly in front of the development. Motorists driving on the zebra lines are hitting cars entering the development. There have been numerous accidents at this location, and he fears that there will be a fatality if nothing is done to correct the problem. Mr. Simon asked for the Board's support as well.

5. Robert Liatto spoke about the need to rezone the Oakland Gardens community and questioned why the delay in rezoning this area. The Oakland Gardens community was told a few years ago that they were just waiting for final certification and now the process seems to have come to a complete standstill. Mr. Liatto also spoke about the heavy amount of truck traffic getting off the Clearview Expwy. traveling on 73 Ave. and the need for some type of traffic enforcement, speed humps or signage on 73 Avenue.

Steve Newman reported that he has spoken to John Young on this issue and the Board has written numerous letters. We also have been informed that we have a new City Planning Community

Liaison person, Edgar Bajana, but he is not here this evening.

6. Catherine Boscarino expressed concerns about the proposed two hotels and 18 two-family homes to be constructed at 183 Street and the Horace Harding Expwy. Ms. Boscarino questioned the impact this new development will have on their residential community, including the additional traffic congestion, parking problems and inadequate sewers. Ms. Boscarino stated that the community would like to know what the final plans are, have some say in the project and have the hotels scaled down.

7. Jerome Schorr also spoke about the proposed hotel and stated that the community still consists basically of one and two family homes. Now they are being faced with a five or six story building which will accommodate approximately 450 people. Mr. Schorr pointed out that the size of this development will negatively impact on their neighborhood and greatly increase traffic congestion in the community, especially during the already crowded rush hours.

8. Anna Genzele lives directly adjacent to the property for the proposed hotel development. They are currently digging and removing contaminated soil from the premises. Ms. Genzele asked what her rights are, what damage this digging and pounding is doing to her property and what is happening with this contaminated soil. The community wants answers.

Steve Newman explained that the digging is a Brownsfield clean-up project and NYSDEC is on site as the work is taking place. We will check further with NYSDEC. As far as the building is concerned, the issue is whether what they propose is as-of-right or whether they will require a variance. If it requires a variance, they would come before the Community Board. He also suggested that the Board will attempt to arrange a meeting with the developer and the residents, but he stressed that the meeting will accomplish nothing unless the meeting remains civil. (The owner has agreed to meet and it will be setup in October).

9. Raul Gordillo, of the Queens Borough Public Library, thanked the Board for our support in the past years of the Queens Public Library. Mr. Gordillo explained that the Library was in jeopardy of cutting the six day service and other programs under the proposed budget cuts for 2009. Fortunately, the budget cuts were reduced due to community support. He asked for our continued support again this year.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Cal. # 201-08 BZ – 40-38 216 Street – Mr. Adam Rothkrug, representing For Our Children, Inc., gave a presentation on the application to permit, in an R3X zoning district, development of a one-story warehouse with storage of commercial vehicles to be used by Lund Fire Products in connection with their existing adjacent business. Mr. Rothkrug explained the reasons why this property is not feasible to develop for permitted residential use. A substantial portion of the premises is located within the bed of a mapped, but undeveloped portion of 41st Ave. In addition, there is a sewer easement which reduces the possible use of the lot, and the property abuts the LIRR tracks. The FAR for the proposed warehouse would be substantially less than the bulk permitted. Mr. Rothkrug stated that this application should help alleviate employee parking on the

street and reduce the number of trucks because of the additional warehouse space. Thomas Buscher, Gerda Soria, Kathleen Cronin and Helen O'Dwyer all spoke in opposition to the proposal stating concerns over quality of life issues that currently affect the neighborhood due to Lund Fire Products. The residents fear an additional warehouse will only expand Lund Fire Products operations and increase the already existing problems by creating more truck traffic, congestion and noise. Frank Skala, President of the East Bayside Homeowners Assoc., stated that Association held a meeting and unanimously voted against this proposal. Christine Haider, East Flushing/North Bayside Zoning Chair, read the committee report giving the details of the application and noted the various quality of life issues affecting the neighborhood which include traffic problems, deliveries at all times of the day until 2 AM and garbage being picked up very early in the morning or late at night. It was also reported that there is an application to demap the privately owned portion of 41st Avenue pending with City Planning which was filed in 2001, but City Planning has not received all the necessary documents from the applicant to proceed. Ms. Haider reported that the committee voted unanimously to recommend disapproval of the variance. Today we received a letter and petition from area residents in opposition to the application. Lengthy discussion followed by the Board members and questions were raised regarding the demapping, the sewer easement, zoning and possible residential development of the property instead of commercial development, as well as concerns about the further expansion of the Lund operation. Motion (08-12) was made to approve the application for development of the lot for a warehouse and parking. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 1 in favor (Doster), 40 opposed (Basom, Bind, Bruno, Caloras, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Euler, Ferrari, Fried, Garippa, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Macinick, McEaney, Meer, Miller, Millet, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Rothman, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Speranza) and no abstentions. The motion did not carry.

2. FY2010 Capital & Expense Budget Priorities – Joan Garippa, Capital & Expense Budget Committee Co-Chair, gave a report stating that all Board members have received a copy of our budget requests as they currently stand. We have solicited new requests from the community which the Committee will review. Three people had registered to speak in support of various projects. Walter Mugdan, President of the Udall's Cove Preservation Committee, thanked the Board for our past support and asked for our continued support to acquire the remaining missing parcels. Mr. Mugdan also spoke about the new \$75,000 restoration project of the Ravine which has just been completed. Carol Marian, President of the Bayside Historical Society, spoke about the restoration of the Ft. Totten building and museum and reported that funding is needed to stabilize the archive collection. It was pointed out to Ms. Marian that Ft. Totten is within the district of CB7 and this matter should be brought to their attention. Ms. Marian also requested funding to restore and preserve the landmarked historic Lawrence Cemetery. The cemetery needs tombstone and fence rehabilitation. Joseph Hellmann spoke as a representative of the Douglaston Garden Club, and solicited the support for the development of a passive use park within the Alley Pond Old Oak Park property. Mr. Hellmann reported that the Old Oak Pond is a natural glacial pond and the property between the pond and Douglaston Parkway requires cleaning and a passage is needed to the pond for the enjoyment of the public. Joan Garippa stated that the Committee will meet within the next few weeks to review the current priorities, as well as the new proposals, to

come up with a new revised priority list for FY2010. The new priority list will then be brought before the Board for a vote at our October meeting. Steve Newman requested that the Committee, when making the final report, list the community the projects are in, including the dollar amount.

Frank Skala stated that he would publicly like to remove all the negative comments he has made in the past about the acquisition of the property at Udalls Cove.

Victor Mimoni requested that the Board send a letter to CB7 endorsing the proposal concerning Ft. Totten Park that was erroneously made to us instead of Board 7. Mr. Mimoni spoke in support of the valuable resource of these original archives.

Steve Newman stated that he would seek the advice of the two former Chairs in terms of whether a letter to Board 7, on behalf of the Bayside Historical Society, would actually be beneficial.

Zion Halili noted that the request for curb repair and replacement at Union Turnpike should be corrected to read Union Turnpike malls between Springfield Blvd. and Hollis Hills Terrace instead of Hollis Court Blvd.

3. Charter Revision Commission - Steve Newman stated that Frank Skala, at sometime during the summer, suggested that we oppose the effort of the Mayor and presumed Charter Revision to eliminate the position of Borough Presidents. At this point in time, no Charter Revision Commission has been appointed and the date has already passed for a vote to be on the ballot in the November election. Therefore, Mr. Newman suggested that we form a committee of the Board that will look not only at the Borough President issue but whatever issues might be changed in the Charter, particularly with respect to zoning and the Board of Standards and Appeals.

Some discussion followed on the issue of term limits. Frank Skala stated we should be pro-active on issues such as term limits and also asked that we pass a resolution in support of the Queens Borough President office.

Steve Newman stated that a Charter Commission takes at least a half a year to formulate what it is going to do. If one is announced, we should then form the committee that looks at all the issues and take a position on issues that we care about.

NEW BUSINESS

Frank Skala suggested that we put New Business and Community Board Discussion back at the beginning of the meeting, as it has been in the past, and we should invest in a loud speaker system that works.

Melvyn Meer agreed that New Business and Member Discussion should be made right after Public Participation so that the members have an opportunity to comment in an orderly way to items brought up by the public.

Melvyn Meer stated that the City of New York seems to be the only place where a homeowner can

install a fence and have the “wrong” side of the fence toward his neighbor’s home. He wants to raise this issue with the appropriate agency.

Melvyn Meer also addressed the issue of school governance and disagreed with the Chair for not placing this item on the agenda.

Steve Newman replied that the State Legislature will not deal with this until late January at the earliest and more likely not until after the State budget process is finalized, which would mean not until the Spring. Therefore, there is clearly enough time to approach this issue in a rational way and take a position.

Mr. Meer disagreed with the Chair and stated that the issue of school governance should be addressed now since the Public Advocate and the Community Council have addressed it and the State legislatures’ election is in November. The Board should have its voice heard now on the issue while it is being reported in the newspapers and discussed elsewhere.

Steve Newman stated that he will be meeting with the Co-Chairs of the Education Committee next week to create an agenda. Obviously, school governance is an issue to review and take to the Education Committee.

Jerry Iannece thanked Frank Skala who provided a minivan to the Mayor’s barbecue, through the East Bayside Homeowners Assoc. This made available transportation to the event for many people.

During the meeting, several other Board members expressed their thanks to Frank Skala for that transportation.

Mamie Smith agreed with comments made during public participation about the excessive truck traffic on 48th Avenue and trucks speeding. She also noted that DEP needs to clean the catch basins to prevent flooding along 47 Ave., 47 Road and 48 Ave. There are many elderly residents in the area that cannot sweep clean the basins. She believes that the Board members should have an opportunity to comment and discuss items brought up by the public directly following Public Participation

Steve Newman stated that it is important we welcome the public by having Public Participation at the beginning of the meeting. We could have Board Member Discussion, exclusively to comment on items raised by the public, immediately following Public Participation and the broader issues raised at the end of the meeting.

Susan Macinick thanked Jerry Iannece for his help with the CERT program incorporation. She also reported that CERT volunteers were available and on standby during last weekend’s storm. She thanked the Board for help in getting the word out to the community. Ms. Macinick also asked for the necessary funding for the CERT program volunteers.

Janet McEneaney reported that trucks are parking overnight by the Bayside Athletic Field and by the Clearview Expwy. between 32 Ave. and 35 Ave. She also reported that last year DOT gave out flyers dealing with traffic problems at PS 159. At first, this was very effective and people were responsive, but there are still traffic problems at the schools and we need to have enforcement.

Robert Speranza made a motion that we place Public Participation at the end of the meeting. By a show of hands, the motion did not carry.

Henry Euler remarked that Board members should be able to comment immediately following Public Participation so that we can react to statements made by the public. Community Board member discussion and New Business should be at the beginning of the meeting, as it previously was, instead of at the end of the meeting.

Motion (08-13) was made to amend the agenda order so that Community Board member discussion and New Business is placed immediately after (1) Minutes (2) Public Participation. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 29 in favor (Bind, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Euler, Garippa, Giusetti, Haber, Halili, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Macinick, McEneaney, Meer, Miller, Mimoni, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rothman, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Speranza), 5 opposed (Doster, Fried, Hellmann, Newman, Sollano) and no abstentions.

Steve Newman reported that there is a resolution in the City Council to have Community Boards appoint 16 and 18 year olds to the Boards on the grounds that this population is under-represented. Discussion followed regarding Board membership requirements. We will refer this issue to the Law Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.